

Changes: new rec.radio.amateur.* newsgroups, cs.utexas.edu gateway

(Note: The following is reprinted with the permission of the author.)

This message describes the rec.radio.amateur.*, rec.radio.cb, rec.radio.info, and rec.radio.swap newsgroups. It is intended to serve as a guide for the new reader on what to find where. Questions and comments may be directed to the author, Jay Maynard, K5ZC, by Internet electronic mail at jmaynard@oac.hsc.uth.tmc.edu. This message was last changed on 30 June 1993 to add the groups created during the latest reorganization vote and the description of the cs.utexas.edu gateway.

History

=====

Way back when, before there was a Usenet, the Internet hosted a mailing list for hams, called (appropriately enough) INFO-HAMS. Ham radio discussions were held on the mailing list, and sent to the mailboxes of those who had signed up for it. When the Usenet software was created, and net news as we now know it was developed, a newsgroup was created for hams: net.ham-radio. The mailing list and the newsgroup were gatewayed together, eventually.

As the net grew, and as packet radio came into vogue, packet discussion began to dominate other topics in the group and on the list. This resulted in the logical solution: a group was created to hold the packet discussion, and another corresponding mailing list was created as well: net.ham-radio.packet and PACKET-RADIO, respectively.

These two groups served for several years, and went through Usenet's Great Renaming essentially unchanged, moving from net.ham-radio[.packet] to rec.ham-radio[.packet]. Readership and volume grew with the rest of the network.

The INFO-HAMS mailing list was originally run from a US Army computer at White Sands Missile Range, SIMTEL20. There were few problems with this arrangement, but one was that the system was not supposed to be used for commercial purposes. Since one of hams' favorite pastimes is swapping gear, it was natural for hams to post messages about equipment for sale to INFO-HAMS/rec.ham-radio. This ran afoul of SIMTEL20's no-commercial-use restriction, and after some argument, a group was created specifically for messages like that: rec.ham-radio.swap. This group wasn't gatewayed to a mailing list, thus avoiding problems.

While all this was happening, other folks wanted to discuss other aspects of the world of radio than the personal communications services. Those folks created the rec.radio.shortwave and rec.radio.noncomm newsgroups, and established the precedent of the rec.radio.* hierarchy, which in turn reflected Usenet's overall trend toward a hierarchical name structure.

The debate between proponents of a no-code ham radio license and its opponents grew fierce and voluminous in late 1989 and 1990. Eventually, both sides grew weary of the debate, and those who had not been involved even more so. A proposal for a newsgroup dedicated to licensing issues failed. A later proposal was made for a group that would cover the many recurring legal issues discussions. During discussion of the latter proposal, it became clear that it would be desirable to fit the ham radio groups under the rec.radio.* hierarchy. A full-blown reorganization was passed by Usenet voters in January 1991, leading to the overall structure we now use.

After the reorganization, more and more regular information postings began to appear, and were spread out across the various groups in rec.radio.*. Taking the successful example of the news.answers group, where informational postings from across the net are sent, the group rec.radio.info was created in December, 1992, with Mark Salyzyn, VE6MGS, initially serving as moderator.

In January, 1993, many users started complaining about the volume in rec.radio.amateur.misc. This led to a discussion about a second reorganization, which sparked the creation of a mailing list by Ian Kluft, KD6EUI. This list, which was eventually joined by many of the most prolific posters to the ham radio groups, came up with a proposal to add 11 groups to the rec.radio.amateur hierarchy in April 1993. The subsequent vote, held in May and early June, approved the creation of five groups: rec.radio.amateur.digital.misc (to replace .packet), .equipment, .homebrew, .antenna, and .space.

The Current Groups

=====

I can hear you asking, "OK, so this is all neat history, but what does it have to do with me now?" The answer is that the history of each group has a direct bearing on what the group is used for, and what's considered appropriate where.

The easy one is rec.radio.amateur.misc. It is what rec.ham-radio was renamed to during the reorganization. Any message that's not more appropriate in one of the other groups belongs here, from contesting to DX to ragchewing on VHF to information on becoming a ham.

The group rec.radio.amateur.digital.misc is for discussions related to (surprise!) digital amateur radio. This doesn't have to be the common two-meter AX.25 variety of packet radio, either; some of the most knowledgeable folks in radio digital communications can be found here, and anything in the general area is welcome. The name was changed to emphasize this, and to encourage discussion not only of other text-based digital modes, such as AMTOR, RTTY, and Clover, but things like digital voice and video as well. The former group, rec.radio.amateur.packet, has not been removed as of

this writing, but it is obsolete, and you should use `.digital.misc` instead. The group has the `.misc` as part of the name to allow further specialization if the users wish it, such as `.digital.tcp-ip`.

The swap group is now `rec.radio.swap`. This recognizes a fact that became evident shortly after the original group was formed: Hams don't just swap ham radio gear, and other folks besides hams swap ham equipment. If you have radio equipment, or test gear, or computer stuff that hams would be interested in, here's the place. Equipment wanted postings belong here too. Discussions about the equipment generally don't; if you wish to discuss a particular posting with the buyer, email is a much better way to do it, and the other groups, especially `.equipment` and `.homebrew`, are the place for public discussions. There is now a regular posting with information on how to go about buying and selling items in `rec.radio.swap`; please refer to it before you post there.

The first reorganization added two groups to the list, one of which is `rec.radio.amateur.policy`. This group was created as a place for all the discussions that seem to drag on interminably about the many rules, regulations, legalities, and policies that surround amateur radio, both existing and proposed. The neverending no-code debate goes here, as does the New Jersey scanner law, the legality of ordering a pizza on the autopatch, what a bunch of rotten no-goodniks the local frequency coordinating body is, and so on.

The other added group is `rec.radio.cb`. This is the place for all discussion about the Citizens' Band radio service. Such discussions have been very inflammatory in `rec.ham-radio` in the past; please do not cross-post to both `rec.radio.cb` and `rec.radio.amateur.*` unless the topic is genuinely of interest to both hams and CBers - and very few topics are.

The `rec.radio.info` group is just what its name implies: it's the place where informational messages from across `rec.radio.*` may be found, regardless of where else they're posted. As of this writing, information posted to the group includes Cary Oler's daily solar propagation bulletins, ARRL bulletins, the Frequently Asked Questions files for the various groups, and radio modification instructions. This group is moderated, so you cannot post to it directly; if you try, even if your message is crossposted to one of the other groups, your message will be mailed to the moderator, who is currently Mark Salyzyn, VE6MGS. The email address for submissions to the group is `rec-radio-info@ve6mgs.ampr.ab.ca`. Inquires and other administrivia should be directed to `rec-radio-request@ve6mgs.ampr.ab.ca`. For more information about `rec.radio.info`, consult the introduction and posting guidelines that are regularly posted to that newsgroup.

The groups `rec.radio.amateur.antenna`, `.equipment`, `.homebrew`, and `.space` are for more specialized areas of ham radio: discussions about antennas, commercially-made equipment, homebrewing, and amateur radio space operations. The `.equipment` group is not the place for buying or selling equipment; that's

what rec.radio.swap is for. Similarly, the .space group is specifically about amateur radio in space, such as the OSCAR program and SAREX, the Shuttle Amateur Radio EXperiment; other groups cover other aspects of satellites and space. Homebrewing isn't about making your own alcoholic beverages at home (that's rec.crafts.brewing), but rather construction of radio and electronic equipment by the amateur experimenter.

The rec.radio.amateur.misc, .packet, and .policy groups, and the rec.radio.info group, are available by Internet electronic mail in digest format; send a mail message containing "help" on a line by itself to listserv@ucsd.edu for instructions on how to use the mail server. The rec.radio.swap group is not available for reading by electronic mail. At this writing, the most recently added groups are also not available for reading by electronic mail, although that may change.

All of the groups can be posted to by electronic mail, though, by using a gateway at the University of Texas at Austin. To post a message this way, change the name of the group you wish to post to by replacing all of the '.'s with '-'s - for example, rec.radio.swap becomes rec-radio-swap - and send to that name@cs.utexas.edu (rec-radio-swap@cs.utexas.edu, for example). You may crosspost by including multiple addresses as Cc: entries (but see below). This gateway's continued availability is at the pleasure of the admins at UT-Austin, and is subject to going away at any time - and especially if forgeries and other net.abuses become a problem. You have been warned.

A Few Words on Crossposting =====

Please do not crosspost messages to two or more groups unless there is genuine interest in both groups in the topic being discussed, and when you do, please include a header line of the form "Followup-To: group.name" in your article's headers (before the first blank line). This will cause followups to your article to go to the group listed in the Followup-To: line. If you wish to have replies to go to you by email, rather than be posted, use the word "poster" instead of the name of a group. Such a line appears in the headers of this article.

One of the few examples of productive cross-posting is with the rec.radio.info newsgroup. To provide a filtered presentation of information articles, while still maintaining visibility in their home newsgroups, the moderator strongly encourages cross-posting. All information articles should be submitted to the rec.radio.info moderator so that he may simultaneously cross-post your information to the appropriate newsgroups. Most newsreaders will only present the article once, and network bandwidth is conserved since only one article is propagated. If you make regular informational postings, and have made arrangements with the moderator to post directly to the group, please cross-post as appropriate.

--

Jay Maynard, EMT-P, K5ZC, PP-ASEL | Never ascribe to malice that which can
jmaynard@oac.hsc.uth.tmc.edu | adequately be explained by stupidity.

"If my car ran OS/2, it'd be there by now" -- bumper sticker
GCS d++ p+ c++ l+ m+/- s/++ g++ w++ t+ r

--

73, Paul W. Schleck, KD3FU

pschleck@unomaha.edu

Celebrating 60 years of the Univ. of Maryland ARA - W3EAX (1933-1993)

Date: 15 Sep 1993 09:38:30 GMT
From: korie!newscast.West.Sun.COM!news2me.EBay.Sun.COM!exodus.Eng.Sun.COM!
bauhaus.Eng.Sun.COM!cliffs@ames.arpa
Subject: Mods database/ftp-530
To: info-hams@ucsd.edu

I've looked in the mods databases mentioned in the FAQ, well with
exception of simtel20 since it is gone :-(, and I have not been
able to find mods for extended receive for the FT-530. I picked up a file
from a local packet BBS that referenced a mod, but alas no luck.
Anyone know the mod or an up to date mod database that is ftp'able?

Cliff

--

Cliff Skolnick | "Say you were laughing at something when I saw you first
cliffs@sun.com | time, such a model, what an actress. I must confess I never
(415) 336-5820 | thought that you'd be who you are do what what you do now."
I think. I am. | -- Bolshoi

Date: 15 Sep 1993 16:50:54 GMT
From: sdd.hp.com!swrinde!cs.utexas.edu!wupost!news.miami.edu!usenet.ufl.edu!
eng.ufl.edu!helios.tcad.ee.ufl.edu!thoman@network.ucsd.edu
Subject: need expert info on nicads.
To: info-hams@ucsd.edu

In article <m9c3n8INNar@exodus.Eng.Sun.COM>, falk@peregrine.Eng.Sun.COM (Ed Falk)
writes:

|> Hi all; I figured these newsgroups would be the best source for information.
|>
|> Not too long ago there was a multi-part article on the care & feeding
|> of nicads. I'm sorry to say that I lost it; but as I recall, the

|> gist of it was as follows:

|>

|> 1) it's very, very bad to reverse polarity on a nicad. For this
|> reason, completely discharging a device with multiple cells is
|> very bad, because if one cell has slightly less charge than the
|> rest, that one cell will be charged backwards by the others.

There's no "if" here; there will always be some cell slightly
less charged and/or of less capacity than its pack-mates.

|> [info deleted]

|>

|> 2) It's almost as bad to over-charge a nicad. This is where the

If you overcharge at the 10 hour rate or less, you'll seldom (maybe
never) see trouble from a little overcharging. I usually end up
overcharging my various batteries, and have not yet run into discharge
voltage depression, though it is "for real".

|> 3) There is a memory effect, in which a nicad which is charged
|> and discharged on a very consistent cycle will eventually reach
|> a state where it can no longer be discharged below it's habitual
|> discharge point. This effect is very slight, and was originally
|> observed in satellites

No, this effect is NON-EXISTENT under the circumstances and
with the battery types you have mentioned.

|> [more deleted]

|>

|> At any rate, it seems to me that the ideal nicad battery charger would operate
|> as follows:

|>

|> 1) all cells charged individually, rather than in series.

This turns out to be unnecessary in practice, though it is the
ideal case. You just have to be sure that overcharging is gentle.

|> 2) Deep cycle: discharge the battery at a fixed current until the
|> voltage drops to some threshold.

This should only be done if you have actually witnessed reduced
capacity. Otherwise, you're just using up a little of your battery's life.

|> 3) Charge: charge the battery at a fixed current until the
|> voltage climbs to some threshold.

No. The actual endpoint voltage is not uniform. On NiCd's you

can watch for temperature rise, a drop in cell voltage, or a drop in the rate-of-rise of cell voltage (among others), and you should usually combine a couple of the available methods.

|> 4) Maintain: hold the cell at a specific "full charge" voltage.

No. Hold the cells with a small `_current_` that won't cause overcharge effects to set in (the 50 hour charge rate might be good; the optimum current will depend on the cells themselves and storage conditions). If you try to hold voltage, temperature changes can cause increasing current and thermal runaway, destroying the pack in an orgy of resistive heating and outgassing (I have witnessed this).

|>

|> Does this make sense?

|>

|> As you've probably guessed by now, I'm planning to design and build my own charger -- one that does it RIGHT for a change. Can anybody tell me what the lower (discharge) and upper (full charge) voltages should be? Can anybody tell me what good discharge and charge currents should be? (I'll be mainly using this to charge AA's for my camera gear.)

|>

|> Of course, a pointer to a consumer charger that does the same job would be nice too.

If you want to build your own, get a rechargeable battery handbook (or similar title) from General Electric, Gates Energy Products (NiCd operations recently purchased by Eveready, so there's a name change), or another vendor. There's much useful info there, including that NiCd's like to be charged with lots of little pulses rather than pure dc.

Greg Thoman: The opinions expressed herein are mine alone, and I am solely irresponsible for them.

Date: Wed, 15 Sep 1993 20:51:32 GMT

From: news.cerf.net!crash!newshub.nosc.mil!dog.ee.lbl.gov!overload.lbl.gov!agate!howland.reston.ans.net!gatech!usenet.ufl.edu!max.fiu.edu!solix!if438819@network.ucsd.edu

Subject: Question: RF and Power Lines

To: info-hams@ucsd.edu

I have a question regarding the use of my equipment near high tension power lines. I recently moved into a house that is near such lines and was wondering what they will do to transmission/reception (havn't

had time to set up my rigs yet, still living out of boxes!)

I am sure they will have some effect but not sure what, or how I should set up my antennas. Anyone know?

Thanks
Brad
KD4NAW

Date: 16 Sep 93 12:28:05 GMT
From: ogicse!uwm.edu!math.ohio-state.edu!sdd.hp.com!hpscit.sc.hp.com!
hpuerca.atl.hp.com!edh@network.ucsd.edu
Subject: Question about ni-cads (was Re: need expert info on nicads.)
To: info-hams@ucsd.edu

rossi@VFL.Paramax.COM (Pete Rossi) writes:

>I have a question about ni-cads....
>Why has their never been a standard developed for ni-cad battery packs?

I'll bite. We've had several Icom H/Ts around the house and it was very neat that the 4AT could always could on borrowing from the 2AT went needed, etc. On the other hand, that pretty much dictated the size of the radios. When my spousal-unit bought the Alinco DJ-580 I was a little miffed that it wouldn't accept the battery packs from my DJ-160. (On the other hand that was a good excuse to go buy my own DJ-580 :-) Of course, the 580 is smaller and lighter than the 160, the battery packs seem to click on solidly and are somewhat stronger plastic; the rounded edges of the pack allow me to slide the H/T into pockets that would otherwise rip out, etc.

As for cross equipment compatability, think of what the form factor limitations would be if your handi-cam and your H/T and your cordless razor and your rechargeable flashlight all had to accept the same battery pack. Not that it couldn't be done, just that rigid constraints dramatically affect design, mostly to the negative (remember the DOS 640k boundary?). The primary impact on amateurs might best be seen in the downsized H/Ts with full features available today; it would not be possible if the design constraint was to continue using the battery pack that fits my Icom 4AT!

Of course, to Kenwood, Icom, et. al. the consideration may be more bottom line: they'd like you to buy from them. And not just for the profit motive! All the makers of these H/Ts etc. want you to be very happy with the quality, durability, usability, etc. of their products. Mostly they feel that is best served if you are using products they have produced, tested, and can stand behind.

Other views?

Cheers & 73 Ed Humphries -- N5RCK
Hewlett-Packard NARC Atlanta GA
edh@hpuaerca.atl.hp.com

Date: Wed, 15 Sep 1993 09:52:27 GMT
From: dog.ee.lbl.gov!agate!howland.reston.ans.net!gatech!kd4nc!ke4zv!
gary@network.ucsd.edu
Subject: There goes the rest of 20m
To: info-hams@ucsd.edu

In article <1993Sep13.131357.2428@ccd.harris.com> drs@ccd.harris.com (Doug Snowden) writes:

>You people are missing the point.

>

>2. Amateur Radio is supposed to be used to explore areas like digital
> communications - fine - but I don't think we are supposed to try and
> establish another western union network. There's too many computer nerds
> out there, and not enough people with the spirit.

What spirit would that be, Jack Daniels? I think you've missed the point. Communications has evolved from isolated people manning their spark stations out in the barn to a world where cooperating networks and systems dominate communications. Amateur radio no longer leads in advancing the art. Today we lag the work of the commercial providers because we insist on competing with each other rather than cooperating in setting up systems to advance communications. Networking is at the cutting edge of communications technology. If we are to regain our place as people working to advance the art, then we must learn to build and operate complex networks. After all, the ARRL was formed as a *relay* network first, it's role as a DX club came later.

Gary

--

| | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Gary Coffman KE4ZV | "If 10% is good enough | gatech!wa4mei!ke4zv!gary |
| Destructive Testing Systems | for Jesus, it's good | uunet!rsiatl!ke4zv!gary |
| 534 Shannon Way | enough for Uncle Sam." | emory!kd4nc!ke4zv!gary |
| Lawrenceville, GA 30244 | -Ray Stevens | |

Date: Wed, 15 Sep 1993 09:44:19 GMT
From: dog.ee.lbl.gov!agate!howland.reston.ans.net!gatech!kd4nc!ke4zv!

gary@network.ucsd.edu
Subject: There goes the rest of 20M
To: info-hams@ucsd.edu

In article <2467@indep1.UUCP> clifto@indep1.UUCP (Cliff Sharp) writes:
>In article <747490498.AA02763@buscard.fidonet.org>
Morrison.Charles.F@f121.n324.z1.fidonet.org (Morrison Charles F) writes:
>>Why should all of our data have to bottleneck at a traffic net where maybe
>>only 8-10 people check in regularly using cw? Please!
>
> For the same reason a repeater can be tied up for an 8-10 person net.
>For the same reason a frequency can be tied up by two operators in QS0.
>For the reason that they have the right to use those frequencies in the mode
>they're using.

I think you're missing the point. Sure particular frequencies can be tied up for hours by a couple of people, the issue is why should the message *system* be stalled by an antiquated net bottleneck. The answer is that it shouldn't of course. And in fact it isn't much that way anymore. Most message handling has moved to packet, AMTOR, and RTTY for speed and accuracy. That's largely replaced the Continental Corps CW nets for relay work. Where the system still falls down is at the ultimate delivery sites. Traffic hangs around on destination BBS systems way too long in many cases.

> Anyone who thinks data throughput is the purpose of amateur radio hasn't
>read the first part of Part 97.

I've read the first part of Part 97, I don't see in there anywhere a mandate to preserve antique methods. On the contrary, I see in there statements about advancing the radio art, public service, expansion of the reservoir of trained operators and trained technicians, and maintenance of international good will. Increasing our capabilities by increasing throughput seems central to our charter.

> Amateurs as a group used to be people who found creative and innovative
>ways around communications problems. Now it appears the group has turned to
>whining that they're not getting their way with their chosen mode of
>operation, and demanding that everyone else get out of their way.

Indeed, amateurs once led in advancing the art by finding creative and innovative ways to communicate. Today many seem stuck in trying to preserve the past instead. IMHO there is still room for the *hobbyist* who wants to preserve antique methods by using AM or CW on the amateur bands, but that's not the central purpose of the amateur radio *service* and doesn't deserve preferred status on the bands.

Gary

--

Gary Coffman KE4ZV |"If 10% is good enough | gatech!wa4mei!ke4zv!gary
Destructive Testing Systems | for Jesus, it's good | uunet!rsiatl!ke4zv!gary
534 Shannon Way | enough for Uncle Sam."| emory!kd4nc!ke4zv!gary
Lawrenceville, GA 30244 | -Ray Stevens |

Date: Wed, 15 Sep 1993 19:46:30 GMT
From: news.cerf.net!crash!newshub.nosc.mil!dog.ee.lbl.gov!agate!
howland.reston.ans.net!darwin.sura.net!mlb.semi.harris.com!
controls.ccd.harris.com!drs@network.ucsd.edu
Subject: There goes the rest of 20M
To: info-hams@ucsd.edu

Gary Coffman (gary@ke4zv.atl.ga.us) wrote:

: In article <2467@indep1.UUCP> clifto@indep1.UUCP (Cliff Sharp) writes:
: >In article <747490498.AA02763@buscard.fidonet.org>
Morrison.Charles.F@f121.n324.z1.fidonet.org (Morrison Charles F) writes:
: >>Why should all of our data have to bottleneck at a traffic net where maybe
: >>only 8-10 people check in regularly using cw? Please!
: >
: > For the same reason a repeater can be tied up for an 8-10 person net.
: >For the same reason a frequency can be tied up by two operators in QS0.
: >For the reason that they have the right to use those frequencies in the mode
: >they're using.

: I think you're missing the point. Sure particular frequencies can be
: tied up for hours by a couple of people, the issue is why should the
: message *system* be stalled by an antiquated net bottleneck. The
: answer is that it shouldn't of course. And in fact it isn't much
: that way anymore. Most message handling has moved to packet, AMTOR,
: and RTTY for speed and accuracy. That's largely replaced the Continental
: Corps CW nets for relay work. Where the system still falls down is at the
: ultimate delivery sites. Traffic hangs around on destination BBS systems
: way too long in many cases.

: > Anyone who thinks data throughput is the purpose of amateur radio hasn't
: >read the first part of Part 97.

: I've read the first part of Part 97, I don't see in there anywhere a
: mandate to preserve antique methods. On the contrary, I see in there
: statements about advancing the radio art, public service, expansion
: of the reservoir of trained operators and trained technicians, and
: maintenance of international good will. Increasing our capabilities
: by increasing throughput seems central to our charter.

Wrong...if you were designing the equipment that you are using, then I

would agree with throughput, but most Hams are only users. Advancing the art is not being an appliance operator...

: > Amateurs as a group used to be people who found creative and innovative
: >ways around communications problems. Now it appears the group has turned to
: >whining that they're not getting their way with their chosen mode of
: >operation, and demanding that everyone else get out of their way.

: Indeed, amateurs once led in advancing the art by finding creative
: and innovative ways to communicate. Today many seem stuck in trying
: to preserve the past instead. IMHO there is still room for the *hobbyist*
: who wants to preserve antique methods by using AM or CW on the amateur
: bands, but that's not the central purpose of the amateur radio *service*
: and doesn't deserve preferred status on the bands.

: Gary

: --

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| : Gary Coffman KE4ZV | "If 10% is good enough | gatech!wa4mei!ke4zv!gary |
| : Destructive Testing Systems | for Jesus, it's good | uunet!rsiatl!ke4zv!gary |
| : 534 Shannon Way | enough for Uncle Sam." | emory!kd4nc!ke4zv!gary |
| : Lawrenceville, GA 30244 | -Ray Stevens | |

End of Info-Hams Digest V93 #1102
